

ROAMING BATES INSPIRES WIN

By ARGUS

Wycombe Wanderers 7, Corinthian Casuals 1

RELISHING the friendly sun, a firm hard Loakes Park pitch and some benevolent covering by Casuals, Wycombe Wanderers' skipper Paul Bates inspired this handsome revenge win with one of the most artistic and tantalising displays of his career.

Roaming restlessly, the baffling Bates was a centre-forward only in the numerical sense. Corinthians' pivot Reg Vowells rubbed his red hair in bewilderment as Paul popped up all over the field to split the Casuals' defence with inaccurate passes.

This Isthmian game was also a personal triumph for new inside-right Ivor Ashby, whose long legs took him pounding through the Casuals defence for three emphatic goals.

But if Bates was the arch schemer and Ashby the destroyer, this was essentially a team win—a mighty tonic for Wycombe fans on the verge of disillusionment.

Wycombe's defence, in which centre-half John Fisher was back to his best after the Maidenhead nightmare, was impressive and strong at half-back and looked as sound as a bell throughout.

Corinthians rarely threatened — danger man, international left-winger Pat Neil, was nursing a heavily strapped up wrist—and home wing halves Dave Thomas and Dave Worley were able to devote a lot of their energies to feeding their own forwards.

TERRIBLE TIME

Playing fast, intelligent soccer, the Wycombe forwards gave the ponderous Casuals defence a terrible time. Five of the seven goals — each of the Wycombe attackers scored — came from perfect use of the through pass. Never have the Wanderers exploited this weapon so immaculately this season.

With either the hapless Vowells or his wing-halves committed to a tackle the ball was slipped past for a Wycombe forward to nip goalwards and score.

Cliff Trott made a steady if unspectacular return to first team duty. Short of speed he may have been, but he took his goal beautifully. Coincidence or not, the Wycombe front line showed a quality of ruthlessness absent for many months.

A 20 minute spell mid-way through the first half stopped all speculation about the result. Wycombe, positively sparkling, hit four splendid goals. After 15 minutes Bates snapped up an ingenious pass from left-winger Alan Murphy to weave through and open the scoring.

Thomas slipped a lovely through ball into the area for Trott to snap a second goal and Casuals defence looked in rags as Ashby and Rockell took advantage of flashes of Bates genius to make the score 4-0. Although inside-left Williams scrambled a goal for Casuals near half-time the game was virtually over.

Even the pedestrian but masterly ball control of Doug Insole could not spark off a Corinthians revival.

John Fisher was the deserved target for congratulations when he started Wycombe's second half goals tally with a precise ground pass to Ashby in the 48th minute. Once again the dashing Ashby gave goalkeeper Swannell no chance.

The lively Murphy—who was making his first senior appearance at Loakes Park—crashed a glorious header past Swannell for the sixth, from a Bates cross, and then provided Ashby with his third success. Quite a day for the Wycombe forwards!

IT'S 7-GOAL WYCOMBE

Wycombe W. 7 C-Casuals 1

WYCOMBE, after several disastrous displays, zoomed back to top form in this trouncing of Corinthian-Casuals.

Wycombe were inspired by captain and centre-forward Paul Bates. His forwards outpaced and out-generalled the uncertain Casuals defence who were upset early on by a nose injury to left-back Chris Joy.

Joy resumed after treatment but there was marked weakness on the left flank.

Bates gave Wycombe the lead after 16 minutes. They piled on three more goals through Ashby, Rockell, and veteran Cliff Trott, recalled to the side for the first time since last October. Williams scored for Casuals just before half-time.

As Wycombe stepped up the pace again in the second half, Casuals were largely penned in their own area, with wingers Insole and Neil breaking through only occasionally and the inside men, Williams and Sanders, too much occupied in helping the defence.

And as the home backs and halves reinforced the forwards, Wycombe's latest recruits, inside-right Ashby with two goals and outside-left Murphy, made the total seven.